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for the Korean war and turned out more for the Vietnam war, but it was gone from its old pre-eminence in amateur radio and shortwave. They tried other approaches, but eventually were taken over by a CB firm in Dallas. As interest in CB died down, Hallicrafters was reduced to nothing much more than a name and the contents of a few packing crates.

One of the CB owners bought out the name and the assets, fired everyone still involved, and moved the works to Miami to start over. The assets were further reduced by three substantial thefts of the stuff shipped to Miami. Still, they are back in business and the name will continue.

The name flared into visibility a couple years ago when an employee of Hallicrafters wrote a letter to Baldwin complaining about the ARRL. The chap reported that the League response was to try to get him fired rather than answer the complaints. Later the chap reported that Baldwin had been successful and that he had indeed been fired as a result.

Hammarlund was a most successful producer of superb receivers for many years. The 1964 crunch hit them hard. Not long after they got caught by this sudden stop in sales, they were selling off their capacitors and parts. National responded to the stop in demand for receivers by putting their money in military contracts . . . and it didn't take much of a miscalculation in that field to put them into bankruptcy.

All three major firms had been weakened considerably by getting into the sideband field late. By 1957 I was trying, as the editor of one of the two ham magazines, to convince the management of these firms that sideband was going to completely replace AM. They wasted several years of valuable product development time, allowing Galaxy and Central Electronics to grow on sideband equipment. They were just really getting into sideband with strength when the 1964 blow came, not only finishing off Hallicrafters, National, and Hammarlund, but also doing in Zenith, Galaxy, Johnson, B&W, and everyone else. Only Drake, which was just getting started in the receiver field, survived the debacle. Their

sales of TVI filters kept them going.

UFOS AGAIN

The lack of hard news seems to have thrown the world of UFOlogists on hard times. A few years ago there were several organizations which were actively following up on UFO reports and publishing monthly newsletters. The oldest and biggest of them, NICAP, seems to have disappeared, with reports that someone took over and took the money. I don't even see any current references to APRO, which took over as number one when NICAP began to go downhill. Now there is a MUFON in Texas, but their newsletter has little excitement in it.

I've been following the UFO news from the first, trying to fit reports together into some sort of pattern. We have had amateur radio UFO nets which were started and then faded away, but they have never accomplished anything of substance. Indeed, if I thought that amateur radio could help to throw some light on the subject, I'd be pushing for whatever I thought would help.

At one time it seemed like it might be possible to take advantage of UFO reports to alert teams ahead of them so a better effort could be made to investigate the phenomena. If people only had early warning, they might be able to get out telescopes, cameras, electrostatic sensors, and other equipment to help us learn more about UFOs. Amateur radio seemed like the best approach to such a warning system . . . but somehow ham nets never really clicked and nothing came of the idea.

After reading several thousand UFO reports and just about every book published on the subject, I began to suspect that there was more than accident involved in the lack of really substantial evidence that UFOs exist. With many reports telling of their instant appearance and disappearance, there was a strong suggestion that some sort of time travel might be involved. This would answer a lot of questions which otherwise involved impossible to accept data.

What other reasonable explanation for the cave paintings from 17,000 years ago which depict the same saucer-like objects which have been reported

right on down through history? No civilization is going to make the same model travel unit for 17,000 years. But if anyone were to invent time travel, you can bet that teams would be going back to write an authentic history of our planet. We don't know the rules of time travel yet, although some recent theorizing about Einstein's equations has persuaded many scientists that time travel may one day be practical.

One of the main worries has to do with what happens if you go back through time and kill your own grandfather. What then? This either can't happen or else it is possible to change events . . . neither of which concepts can be grasped with any clarity. More likely is that time travelers have some rules which they damned well better follow if they are going to ever return to their starting point. If so, it may be that the rules will cover making changes in the past which could affect the future . . . such as leaving evidence behind of their visit (such as we have been looking for).

There are a lot of reports of fake government agents who have confiscated the better UFO pictures which have been taken. There are hundreds of reports of people who have met the UFO travelers, but the surprising thing is the almost total lack of consistency in their reports of what they were told. Of course, if time travelers have a need to create confusion so as not to change the future, this would explain it.

Once you remove the concept of time as a barrier in travel, you can go anywhere you want, so the prospect of some other civilization visiting our planet becomes not merely possible, but virtually inevitable. And once they arrive, they will surely want to check back over the history of the planet. This would hold for all visitors . . . which might help explain the variety of beings reported by contactees. Some short, some tall, some fat, some thin.

If this is an even close guess to what has been happening, our trying to get more accurate data on the UFOs would obviously be doomed to failure. Thus, even if we were able to get a ham net working to help gather more data on the UFOs, the end result would be nothing more substantial than we have

at present . . . or else the future might be changed . . . or the time traveler might go pffft.

I do appreciate getting newspaper clippings of UFO reports, so keep 'em coming. And if there are any serious organizations in the field, I'd like to know about them, too. In the meanwhile, I'll keep enjoying the swamp gas and plasma explanations for UFOs.

6000 WORDS PER MINUTE?

One of the projects that I am working on with the microcomputer industry has to do with promoting the concept of electronic mail. A number of large firms are working on the project, but I think it will be possible for the microcomputer industry to pull an end run and beat out Ma Bell, ITT, and any other firms interested in cornering EM communications. And that should even include the post office.

If the microcomputer industry can come up with a slick system which will enable any microcomputer user to send messages to any other user, all automatically and via the telephone wires, I think we'll have a working service before even IBM can do anything about it.

The basic idea is to have a box which will plug into a microcomputer and also into the telephone lines. This would allow you to write a message via a word processing program, and then it would ask you for the phone number to which the message is to be sent. From there on it would be all automatic. The box would disconnect your telephone so you would not be able to pick it up and screw up the communications. It would then dial up the desired number . . . and keep at it every minute or so if the number is busy the first time around. When the connection is made, it would cause the telephone on the other end to be disconnected and turn on the receiving computer. Then it would send the message, along with a verifying system which would make sure the message was received correctly. Once the message was completed, it would disconnect . . . unless the other person pushed a hold button to hold the circuit for an immediate answer.

The incoming message would be stored on a disk and perhaps a light would indicate the presence of a message. Naturally it would be simple to have the